

It's electric

Duxbury teen rebuilds a 1980 electric Comuta-car

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With one year of high school still remaining, Chad Conway already has his sites set on the future, and his mark firmly planted in Duxbury. He is hard to miss driving around in a Lego-like bright yellow two-door 1980 Electric Comuta-Car, known as "the cheese wedge."

An avid car enthusiast since he was a child, Conway wanted to attempt to rebuild a car. His first thoughts were to try and rebuild a 1960 classic, a 1970 Mustang or Factory Five reproduction. However, Conway's technology and

engineering teacher Chris Connors got him interested in alternative energy, and introduced him to a 1980 electric car that was in need of some "serious work," he said.

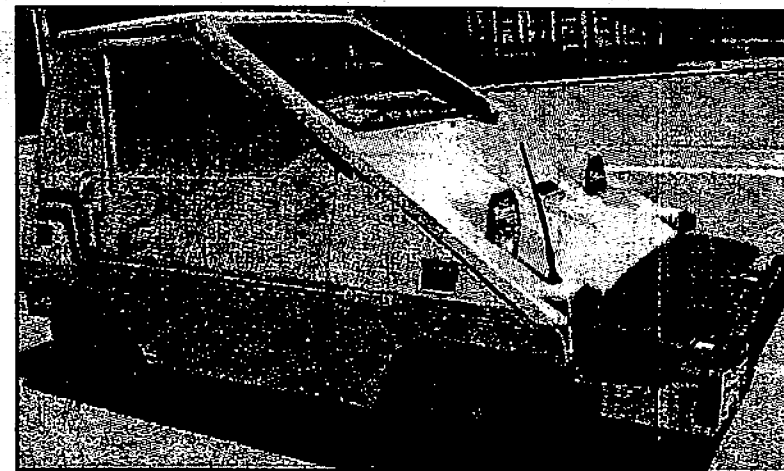
The car runs on eight 6-volt deep cycle high-output batteries, like the ones used to run golf carts. The car can be charged on any household outlet, and takes approximately eight hours for a full charge of 48 volts, from no charge Conway said. On a flat surface the cheese wedge can get up to 38 miles per hour and about 50 mph going downhill, with

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To see video of Chad
Conway's electric car, visit
Duxbury.wickedlocal.com

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Chad Conway's electric car
runs on eight 6-volt batteries.



STAFF PHOTO/ANDRIA FARRELL

Electric car gives student a charge

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three different speed settings. The car is equipped with a four-point safety harness required for Massachusetts's state inspection.

Aside from the lack of an emissions system, the car is equipped with all other standard features, blinkers, windshield wipers, lights, license plate lights, storage, horn, back and front bumper, and a heating system created by a running fan across the electric motor, which gets warm during operation. Although currently the car is without a radio, it is equipped for one. The only modern amenity the car lacks is an air conditioner, however, the windows are completely retractable. When Conway gets the time he also plans to create a hard convertible top for his tiny transportation.

Compared to the nearly \$3 per

gallon price for gasoline these days, the electric car only costs 10 cents per hour of charge with an estimated eight-hour maximum charge time, equaling approximately 80 cents per charge, with an approximate 40 to 60 miles per charge range. The average car trip in the United States is approximately 20 miles. The average American fills up once a week, for a car, it is approximately \$40 per fill-up. Even if the electric car is charged for eight hours every day it still only cost \$5.60 a week to run the car.

"It is small change to keep the battery and life," Conway said.

Conway hopes to go into the automotive design industry after college and design, and build, an electric car. As a member of Sustainable Duxbury, a school group involved in creating ways

to conserve energy and improves the environment; he hopes that the electric car is the new wave of the future.

Conway, also a member of the sailing team, ski team, and the band, has a bright future ahead of him. He has four AP classes behind him, and still one more year of school ahead of him, and with schools like Stanford and the University of Michigan in the back of his mind, the 17-year-old car enthusiast is on his way towards creating the cars of the future, for save the environment of the past.